

Message Text

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46

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 OMB-01 AID-20 EB-11 COME-00

TRSE-00 IO-14 SCEM-02 SCI-06 INT-08 AGR-20 CIEP-02

STR-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 NIC-01

DRC-01 /196 W

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R 191110Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9149

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 19630

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ENRG, TH

SUBJECT: CHARTCHAI'S TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST - RESULTS INCONCLUSIVE

REF: BANGKOK 19363

1. TWO ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS DECEMBER 19 CARRIED DIAMETRICALLY
OPPOSED STORIES ON OUTCOME OF DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER CHARTCHAI'S
OIL SEEKING MISSION TO MIDDLE EAST. NATION HEADLINE STATE "CHART
CHAI RETURNS EMPTY HANDED?" AND POST SAID HE "CLINCHES OIL DEAL."

2. EXTENSIVE BUT INITIAL INQUIRIES MADE BY EMBASSY OFFICERS OF
OIL INDUSTRY AND RTG SOURCES ALSO YIELDED NO CLEAR PICTURE AS TO
SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF CHARTCHAI'S MISSION. INABILITY OBTAIN MORE
PRECISE INFORMATION IN TIME AVAILABLE CAUSED BY VIRTUALLY IMMEDIATE
DEPARTURE OF SAME OFFICIALS FOR PRC WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED CHARTCHAI
TO ME. MINOR MFA OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF CHARTCHAI'S TRIP RESULTED IN
FIRM CRUDE SUPPLY CONTRACT AND THAT ARABAS ASSURED THAILAND OF
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"FRIENDLY COUNTRY" TREATMENT. HOWEVER, OFFICIAL PRESS SPOKESMAN OF
FOREIGN MINISTFRY SAID THAILAND WAS STILL CONSIDERED A "NEUTRAL

COUNTRY" BY ARABS, AND WOULD BE SUBJECT TO CONTINUING ARAB RESTRICTIONS
ON POL SALES. MOREOVER, PRESS SPOKESMAN TOLD EMBOFF NO CRUDE SUPPLY CONTRACT WAS SIGNED.

3. REPRESENTATIVES OF MAJOR OIL COMPANIES IN THAILAND WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED CHARTCHAI TO MIDDLE EAST ALSO HAVE GIVEN IMPRECISE REPORTS.

ESSO OFFICIAL REPORTED DELEGATION MADE OFFER TO BARTER QUANTITY OF PARBOILED RICE FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE MONTH'S SUPPLY CRUDE AT CURRENT THAI CONSUMPTION LEVELS (4.6 MILLION BARRELS) AND THIS WELL RECEIVED BY SAUDIS. HOWEVER, HE ALSO STRESSED THAT NOTHING DEFINITE HAD BEEN AGREED AND THAT CRUDE PRICE QUOTED BY SAUDIS WAS HIGHER THAN CRUDE BROUGHT TO THAILAND BY ESSO. SAME SOURCE TOLD EMBOFF IT WAS HIS JUDGMENT THAT CHARTCHAI TRIP TURNED OUT "AS WELL AS COULD BE EXPECTED" FOR RTG.

4. REPRESENTATIVE OF SUMMIT OIL COMPANY DESCRIBED RESULTS AS FALLING BETWEEN OVERLY OPTIMISTIC AND PESSIMISTIC NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS.

HE REPORTED THAT KING FAISAL TOLD CHARTCHAI THE RTG WOULD HAVE TO PETITION FOREIGN OFFICES OF INDIVIDUAL ARAB COUNTRIES' BEFORE FRIENDLY NATION" STATUS COULD BE GRANTED. HE ASSERTED THAT FAISAL, HAD GRANTED "SUCH" STATUS TO TAIWAN IN CONTRAST TO HIS TREATMENT OF THAILAND.

5. SUMMIT REPRESENTATIVE ALSO REPORTED THAT KING FAISAL ASKED THAI OIL COMPANY MEMBERS OF DELEGATION HOW MUCH CRUDE THAI COMPANIES HAD PURCHASED FROM MIDDLE EAST DURING FIRST NINE MONTHS 1973. SAID HIS FIRM WAS ONLY ONE THAT ANSWERED. ASSERTED THAT MAJOR OIL COMPANIES (SHELL, ESSO, CALTEX) REFUSED TO ANSWER PRECISELY OUT OF FEAR IT WOULD SHOW THAT SHORTFALLS IN THAILAND UNJUSTIFIED BY ARAB PRODUCTION OUTBACKS AND HAD IN FACT RESULTED BECAUSE MAJORS PREFER TO SELL CRUDE AND PRODUCTS IN OTHER MARKETS SUCH AS JAPAN.

6. CHARTCHAI AND TRADE DELEGATION EXPECTED TO RETURN TO THAILAND
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FROM PEKING 29 DECEMBER.
KINTNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PETROLEUM, SUPPLIES, SALES, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BANGKO19630
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731217/aaaaamcq.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BANGKOK 19363
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27-Jul-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <28-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHARTCHAI'S TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST - RESULTS INCONCLUSIVE
TAGS: ENRG, TH, XF, (CHARTCHAI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005